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Asymptotic Theory of Electromagnetic Waves
in an Inhomogeneous Anisotropic Medium

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Abstract

Recently developed "ray methods" for the asymptotic solution of linear partial differential equations are applied to a system of time-dependent magneto-ionic equations. These are equations for E , H , and the electron current, J . For time-harmonic waves J can be eliminated and the equations reduce to the usual equations of the magneto-ionic theory. The time-dependent equations contain a large parameter λ , the plasma frequency, which serves as an expansion parameter. In the "strongly anisotropic" case both the gyro frequency and plasma frequency are large. In the simpler "weakly anisotropic" case only the plasma frequency is large. Both cases can be treated by the general method presented. The weakly anisotropic case is analyzed in greater detail. One result of this analysis is a formula for the rate of rotation of the electric vector about a curved ray in an inhomogeneous medium. The formula reduces to that of the well-known Faraday rotation for the special case of a plane wave propagating in a homogeneous medium.

1. Introduction

In recent years asymptotic methods have been developed for the solution of a large class of problems for linear partial differential equations. These problems involve a parameter and the methods provide one or more terms of the asymptotic expansion, say for large values of the parameter, of the solution of a given initial or boundary value problem. They are often applicable to problems for which no exact solution method is known, and even for problems that can be solved exactly it frequently happens that only the asymptotic expansion of the solution is sufficiently simple to be useful in practical applications. An important class of asymptotic methods is characterized by the fact that certain curves, or "rays", play a central role in the theory. The rays are important because the functions which make up the various terms of the expansion satisfy ordinary differential equations along these curves. Often these equations can be solved explicitly to yield relatively simple formulas that yield considerable insight into the physical nature of the solutions. These "ray methods" are closely related to and generalize the methods of geometrical optics and Keller's geometrical theory of diffraction [5].

In this paper we apply ray methods to the solution of a system of partial differential equations that describe electromagnetic wave propagation in the ionosphere. By combining Maxwell's equations, in their time-dependent form, with a simple equation of motion for free electrons we obtain a hyperbolic system of partial differential equations for the electric and magnetic field E and H , and the electron current J .

In section 2 we show that for time-harmonic waves we can eliminate j and this system reduces to the usual equations of the magnetoionic theory [3,4]. Therefore we refer to the equations for E , B , and J as "time-dependent magnetionic equations". They contain a large parameter, λ , the average plasma frequency, which serves as our expansion parameter. An equivalent dimensionless parameter is $\lambda L/c$, where L is a characteristic length of the problem and c is the speed of light. In section 2 we distinguish two cases, both of which can be treated by the general method discussed in section 3. In the "strongly anisotropic" case both the gyro frequency and plasma frequency are large parameters. In the "weakly anisotropic" case only the plasma frequency is large.

The discussion in section 3 is a brief but self-contained treatment of the method developed in [4] and [6] for the asymptotic solution of dispersive symmetric hyperbolic systems. It includes an improved treatment of the solution of the "transport equations" for the case of a double root. This case is important for the application considered here.

In section 4 we apply the general results of section 3 to the time-dependent magnetionic equations. For simplicity we consider the weakly anisotropic case and find that there are three types of modes. The "propagating modes" are the most important. They contain only "wave frequencies" greater than the plasma frequency, propagate with "group velocity" less than c , and are attenuated with "decay exponent" proportional to the collision frequency. In addition to the propagating modes there are "standing electric modes" corresponding to an oscillation with the local plasma frequency, and static magnetic modes. For both of these modes the group velocity is zero.

In section 5 we consider the propagation motion and study the direction of the field vectors. We find that they are perpendicular to the ray but rotate about it. We derive an explicit formula for the rate of rotation in an inhomogeneous medium, for which the rays may be curved. For the special case of a time-harmonic plane wave propagating in a homogeneous medium the formula reduces to that of the well-known Faraday rotation.

Although we have pursued the weakly anisotropic case further, we emphasize that the strongly anisotropic case is also included in the general theory of section 3. Further analysis of this case requires the study of the dispersion relation and the null vectors of the "dispersion matrix". The difficulties that arise here are algebraic and essentially the same as those that arise in the usual magnetooptic theory, where they have been analyzed in detail [1,2]. It seems clear that many of the results of the standard theory can be applied to our asymptotic theory, but we have not undertaken to do that here.

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$$\frac{\partial \mathbf{B}}{\partial t} = \nabla \times (\mathbf{E} + \mathbf{v} \times \mathbf{B})$$

$$\nabla \cdot \mathbf{B}(0) = 0,$$

$$\mathbf{E}(0) = \mathbf{0},$$

Hence \mathbf{E} and \mathbf{B} are the electric and magnetic field vectors and ϵ and μ the dielectric constant and magnetic permeability of free space. It follows immediately from (2) that $\nabla^2 \mathbf{B}(0) = 0$, hence (3) is automatically satisfied if it is satisfied at a given time, say $t=0$. Thus (3) may be treated as a condition on the initial data of an initial value problem electromagnetic field. We shall view (4) as a formula for the charge density ρ . Then, except for the initial data condition (3) we need only consider (1) and (2).

In order to describe electromagnetic wave propagation in a plasma we assume that the current density vector \mathbf{j} consists of two parts,

$$\mathbf{j} = \mathbf{j}_0 + \mathbf{j}_e \quad (5)$$

where \mathbf{j}_0 is the permanent current, and \mathbf{j}_e is the current due to motion of free charges. (We might also think of ions.) Thus

$$\mathbf{j} = \mathbf{j}_0 + \mathbf{j}_e \quad (6)$$

and in the nonlinear theory, n is the number density of electrons, and \mathbf{v} is their velocity. We now introduce the equation of

nature (Shank's condition)

$$B_{\text{ext}} = \mu_0 \epsilon_0 c E_0 / (2 \pi m v) .$$

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Here a is the charge-to-mass ratio and B_0 is a (spacetime) universal magnetic field. We assume that $|E| \ll |B_0|$ and we have relegated the contribution of $|E|$ to the Lorentz force, i.e., to the bracketed term in (7). The second force term in (7) is a damping force due to collision, and ν is called the collision frequency. Thus (6) and (7) yield

$$\frac{d\mathbf{v}}{dt} = \frac{e^2 N}{m} \mathbf{E} - \frac{e\nu}{m} \mathbf{B} \times \mathbf{J} - \nu \mathbf{f} . \quad (8)$$

We now introduce the plasma frequency

$$c\phi^2 = \frac{N e^2}{m} , \quad (9)$$

and the gyro frequency ω defined by

$$\omega = \text{Im}(\omega_0), (\text{Im} \neq 0) . \quad (10)$$

$$\frac{\partial \mathbf{v}_0}{\partial t} = \mathbf{J}_0 \times \frac{\partial \mathbf{B}_0}{\partial t} = \omega \mathbf{B}_0 . \quad (11)$$

As \mathbf{J} is a unit vector, Thus (3), (5) and (8) become

$$\mathbf{B}_0 \cdot \nabla \times \mathbf{E}_0 = -\partial \mathbf{B}_0 / \partial t , \quad (12)$$

$$\mathbf{B}_0 \times \nabla \times \mathbf{B}_0 = 0 , \quad (13)$$

$$\mathbf{J}_0 = \gamma \mathbf{E} \times \mathbf{B}_0 + \mathbf{v}_0 - c\phi^2 \mathbf{B}_0 = 0 . \quad (14)$$

These partial differential equations for \mathbf{E} , \mathbf{B} , and \mathbf{j} will be called the (electrostatic) magnetohydrodynamic equations. They reduce to the usual equations of the magnetohydrodynamics in the limit case of a non-relativistic fluid, provided one makes the assumption that \mathbf{E} , \mathbf{B} , \mathbf{J} and \mathbf{g} are functions of x ,

the corresponding matrix. Then if we take the transpose of both sides of (15)

$$\text{matrix} = \text{matrix}^T + \text{matrix}^T.$$

$$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

is the solution and since this is the identity matrix

$$\text{matrix} = \text{matrix}^T. \quad (16)$$

REMARK

$$\begin{aligned} \text{matrix} &= \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} + \dots \\ \text{matrix} &= \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} + \dots \end{aligned}$$

END

$$Y = \alpha \frac{I - Z}{1 - \alpha Z}.$$

Now (17) follows

$$Z = \text{matrix}^T,$$

hence $Z = \text{matrix}$ follows.

$$= \frac{\text{matrix}^T - \text{matrix}^{TT}}{1 - \alpha \text{matrix}^T}.$$

Thus, by eliminating Z from (15)-(17) we obtain the equation

$$Y_1 = \text{matrix} + \text{matrix}^T I_3, \quad (18)$$

$$Y_2 = \text{matrix}^2 + 0, \quad (19)$$

which are the usual equations of the magnetohydrodynamics theory [1,2]. It is interesting to note that equation (18) describes the relatively simple matrix K , in order to eliminate Z we must introduce the much more complicated matrix K^{TT} .

where $\alpha_1 = \frac{1}{2}(\gamma_1 + \gamma_2)$, $\alpha_2 = \frac{1}{2}(\gamma_1 - \gamma_2)$.

Equations (14) can be conveniently reduced to a single matrix equation. For any vector $\mathbf{z} = (z_1, z_2, z_3)$ we introduce the 3 \times 3 matrix

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & -\alpha_2 & \alpha_2 \\ \alpha_2 & 0 & -\alpha_1 \\ -\alpha_1 & \alpha_1 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \quad (25)$$

Then for any vector \mathbf{z} it is easily seen that

$$(G)\mathbf{z} = G\mathbf{z}. \quad (26)$$

We also introduce the vector λ defined by

$$\lambda = \sqrt{\epsilon}\mathbf{z}. \quad (27)$$

Then (14) becomes

$$\lambda_2 = \gamma_1 z_2 + \gamma_2 z_1 = (\gamma_1 \mathbf{z}) \cdot \mathbf{e}_2 = 0, \quad (28)$$

and the system of equations (13), (15); (26) can be written in the block matrix notation:

$$\begin{bmatrix} \frac{\partial}{\partial z_1} & -\gamma_2 \\ \gamma_1 & \frac{\partial}{\partial z_2} \\ \sqrt{\epsilon} \mathbf{e}_2 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} z_1 \\ z_2 \\ z_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ \frac{-1}{\sqrt{\epsilon}} \end{bmatrix}. \quad (29)$$

Each entry in the square matrix on the left side of (29) represents a 3×3 matrix. Thus, e.g. $\frac{\partial}{\partial z_1} = \sqrt{\epsilon} \mathbf{I}_3$ where \mathbf{I}_3 is the 3×3 identity matrix. Furthermore each entry in the column matrices represents a column vector of dimension 3.

We now introduce three 3×3 matrices A^1 , A^2 , A^3 with entries either zero or one. These matrices can be defined simultaneously by writing

in which $\alpha = \sqrt{1 - \beta^2}$, $\beta = \sqrt{\epsilon}$, $\gamma = \sqrt{1 - \epsilon}$, $\delta = \sqrt{1 + \epsilon}$, $\theta = \pi/2$.
 The second (an (dissipative) collision frequency ν at a large value of λ is

obtained by letting λ approach zero.

The next result is a modification of Lax's linearized equation (2) due to [1].

$$\frac{d}{dt} \left(\begin{array}{c} \psi_1 \\ \psi_2 \\ \psi_3 \\ \psi_4 \end{array} \right) + \frac{1}{\lambda} \left(\begin{array}{c} A_{11} \\ A_{21} \\ A_{31} \\ A_{41} \end{array} \right) = \lambda \left(\begin{array}{c} \psi_1 \\ \psi_2 \\ \psi_3 \\ \psi_4 \end{array} \right) + \frac{1}{\lambda} \left(\begin{array}{c} B_{11} \\ B_{21} \\ B_{31} \\ B_{41} \end{array} \right), \quad (4)$$

where A_{ij} , B_{ij} , $i, j = 1, 2, 3, 4$ are constant matrices, $A_{ii}^T = A_{ii}$, $B_{ii}^T = B_{ii}$, $B_{ij} = B_{ji}$, $i \neq j$; ψ_1 , ψ_2 , ψ_3 and ψ_4 are orthonormal column vectors, and λ is a large positive parameter. Here we present a direct but simplified analogy of the method of [3, 6] for the second order of an asymptotic approximation of hyperbolic equations, i.e., an equation of the form (1) for which A^2 is positive definite, A^T , A and A^2 are Hermitian, and it is uniformly parabolic. These conditions will be satisfied by the equations mentioned in section 2.

We consider a formal asymptotic expansion

$$\psi = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \psi_n e^{-\lambda n t}, \quad (5)$$

which is to be a solution of (1) with (5a). The function ψ is called the phase function and the functions ψ_j are called amplitude coefficients. We introduce the partial derivatives

$$\omega = \partial \psi / \partial t, \quad k_y = \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial x_y} \quad (y = 1, 2, \dots, n) \quad (6)$$

and the dispersion matrix

$$\Theta(x, y, w, k) = \sum_{y=1}^n k_y \lambda^{y-1} e^{-\lambda t}. \quad (7)$$

By inserting (8) into (7) with (6), we obtain the recurrence relation (10).

$$\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k!} \left(\frac{\partial}{\partial t} - \frac{1}{2} \nabla \cdot \mathbf{v} + \frac{1}{2} \mathbf{v} \cdot \nabla \right)^k \mathbf{f}_0 = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k!} \left(\frac{\partial}{\partial t} - \frac{1}{2} \nabla \cdot \mathbf{v} + \frac{1}{2} \mathbf{v} \cdot \nabla \right)^k \mathbf{f}_0 \quad (10)$$

Now

individual solutions are obtained by taking the terms in (10) with the different \mathbf{v} -integrations,

$$\text{line } \mathbf{v} \cdot \nabla \left(\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k!} \left(\frac{\partial}{\partial t} - \frac{1}{2} \nabla \cdot \mathbf{v} + \frac{1}{2} \mathbf{v} \cdot \nabla \right)^k \mathbf{f}_0 \right), \quad (11)$$

is omitted. Let

$$(\mathbf{v}, \mathbf{v}', \mathbf{v}'') \quad (12)$$

be a word of (12) of multiplicity p . This means that \mathbf{v} and \mathbf{v}' are of length p , \mathbf{v}'' is identity-independent null vector of length p .

$$\mathbf{v} \cdot \mathbf{v}' = 0, \quad \mathbf{v}' \cdot \mathbf{v}'' = 0, \quad \mathbf{v} \cdot \mathbf{v}'' = 0. \quad (13)$$

Since, for example, the components v_i of \mathbf{v} are linear, and v'_i is position-dependent, these entries will vanish if v'_i is not an identity-independent null vector. This is equal to zero if the components of \mathbf{v} and \mathbf{v}' are identity-independent. The number p can be of three types:

$$v_{ij} \cdot v'_{jkl} = v_{jkl} \quad \text{if } i = l, \quad (14)$$

Equation (8), considered as a linear order partial differential equation for $\mathbf{u}(t, \mathbf{x})$ [see (3)] can be solved by the method of characteristics (14). If we introduce the group velocity vector \mathbf{g} , with components

$$g_v = \partial \mathbf{u} / \partial \mathbf{v}_v, \quad v = 1, \dots, n, \quad (15)$$

If \mathbf{g} and \mathbf{g}' are column vectors the inner product $(\mathbf{g}, \mathbf{g}')$ is defined by $(\mathbf{g}, \mathbf{g}') = \sum_{i=1}^n g_i g'_i$. The bar denotes the complex conjugate. For matrices it denotes the Hermitian conjugate,

Now $\hat{g} = \text{constant}$. For each α the q -independent part $\hat{g}_{\alpha\beta}(x,y)$ defines a mapping from x,y to \hat{x},\hat{y} which preserves

$$\hat{g}(\hat{x}) = \hat{g}(x_{\alpha}) + \frac{\partial \hat{g}_{\alpha\beta}}{\partial x_{\alpha}} \frac{\partial \hat{x}}{\partial x_{\alpha}} \frac{\partial \hat{g}_{\beta\gamma}}{\partial x_{\beta}} \frac{\partial \hat{x}}{\partial x_{\beta}} + \dots , \quad (25)$$

Hence we have irreduced the expression of the determinant by q factors of the $\hat{g}^{\alpha\beta}$ term. Since a determinant contains what we need and the others we have the identity,

$$\sum_{\alpha=1}^q \frac{\partial \hat{g}_{\alpha\beta}}{\partial x_{\alpha}} \frac{\partial \hat{x}}{\partial x_{\alpha}} = q \det \hat{g}_{\alpha\beta} . \quad (26)$$

By differentiating (25) and using (26) and (22) we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{1}{q} \frac{\partial \hat{g}}{\partial t} &= \frac{1}{q} \left(\sum_{\alpha=1}^q \frac{\partial \hat{g}_{\alpha\beta}}{\partial x_{\alpha}} \frac{\partial \hat{x}}{\partial x_{\alpha}} \right) - \frac{1}{q} \left[\sum_{\alpha=1}^q \frac{\partial}{\partial x_{\alpha}} \left(\frac{\partial \hat{g}_{\alpha\beta}}{\partial x_{\alpha}} \right) \right] \left[\frac{\partial \hat{g}_{\beta\gamma}}{\partial x_{\beta}} \frac{\partial \hat{x}}{\partial x_{\beta}} \right] \\ &\equiv \frac{-1}{q} \frac{\partial}{\partial x_{\beta}} \left(\frac{\partial \hat{g}_{\alpha\beta}}{\partial x_{\alpha}} \right) = \sum_{\alpha=1}^q \frac{\partial \hat{g}_{\alpha\beta}}{\partial x_{\alpha}} \cdot \text{div } \hat{g} . \end{aligned} \quad (27)$$

This identity which relates the jacobian of the ray transformation and the divergence of the group velocity vector will be used shortly.

We now impose the following condition on the coefficient matrices of (1):

$$(C + C^*)_{\beta\alpha} = \sum_{\nu=0}^q (\tilde{e}_\beta, A_\nu^\nu e_\alpha) = q \delta_{\beta\alpha} ; \beta, \alpha = 1, \dots, q . \quad (28)$$

The condition states that the qqq matrix whose entries are given by the left side of (28) reduces to a scalar. The condition is trivially satisfied if $q=1$. For the magneto-ionic equations of section 2, the matrices A_ν^ν are constant hence (28) reduces to a condition on the matrix C , which we shall examine in section 4. Now from (23), (17), (27) and (28) we obtain

We now see

$$A = e^{i\theta} \tilde{A} e^{-i\theta}. \quad (42)$$

Then (40) yields

$$\tilde{A} + P \tilde{A} = 0, \quad (43)$$

where

$$P = Q + \frac{iU}{2\pi}, \quad (44)$$

and it follows from (43) that

$$Q + P = 0. \quad (45)$$

Then P is anti-hamiltonian.

We now assume that the elements of the matrix U are all real. Thus we impose the condition

$$\tau_{\beta\alpha}^* = i\tau_{\beta\alpha} \quad ; \quad \beta, \alpha = 1, 2. \quad (46)$$

$$Q = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & Q_1 \\ -Q_1 & 0 \end{bmatrix}. \quad (47)$$

It follows from (44) that

$$P = Q_{12} = -iQ_{21} \quad (48)$$

now set

$$U(t) = \begin{bmatrix} \cos \delta(t) & -\sin \delta(t) \\ \sin \delta(t) & \cos \delta(t) \end{bmatrix} \quad (49)$$

Then by computing \dot{U} and PU from (47) and (49) it is easy to see that the solution of (43) is

$$\tilde{A}(t) = U(t)\tilde{A}(t_0) \quad (50)$$

the last term is the average energy density, and the second and third terms are the average magnetic energy density, and the last term is the voltage across your unit volume of the electrons. For any vector \mathbf{k}_v we can show (3.30) that

$$\mathbf{k} \cdot \mathbf{S} = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{v=1}^3 \mathbf{k}_v (\mathbf{k}_v, \mathbf{A}^V \mathbf{E}) = \frac{1}{2} (\mathbf{k}_1 \cdot \mathbf{B} \mathbf{E} \mathbf{k}_1 + \mathbf{k}_2 \cdot \mathbf{B} \mathbf{E} \mathbf{k}_2 + \mathbf{k}_3 \cdot \mathbf{B} \mathbf{E} \mathbf{k}_3), \quad (56)$$

$$\mathbf{k} \in \mathbb{R}^3,$$

\mathbf{S} reduces to the usual electromagnetic Poynting vector.

For complex solutions we define S_v and \bar{S}_v by

$$S_v = \frac{1}{2} (\mathbf{R} \mathbf{E}_v, \mathbf{A}^V \mathbf{R} \mathbf{E}_v), \quad v=0, 1, \dots, n; \quad (57)$$

and for our asymptotic solution using $\exp(i\lambda t)$ we find that

$$S_v = \frac{1}{6} \left[(z_0, A^V z_0) + (\bar{z}_0, A^V \bar{z}_0) + e^{i\lambda t} (z_0, A^V z_0) + e^{-i\lambda t} (z_0, A^V \bar{z}_0) \right]. \quad (58)$$

We note that the last two terms contain oscillatory factors, hence if we average (58) over a short time interval, the last two terms will be asymptotically zero for $\lambda \rightarrow \infty$. Thus the average value of S_v is given by

$$\frac{1}{6} [(z_0, A^V z_0) + (\bar{z}_0, A^V \bar{z}_0)]. \quad (59)$$

Thus (59) reduces to

$$\langle S_v \rangle = \frac{1}{6} (z_0, A^V z_0), \quad (60)$$

and we see from (30) that

$$w = \langle S_0 \rangle. \quad (61)$$

That is why we have called w the average energy density. Furthermore we see from (19), (27), and (30) that

$$\langle S_0 \rangle = w_0. \quad (62)$$

Thus the average energy density, voltage, current, and the corresponding differential equation are all meaningful equations.

The equations discussed in section 4 show if the gamma value created in section 2, therefore the theory developed there applies to them. In order to obtain more specific results it is necessary to discuss the null eigenvectors ψ_3 of the matrix G and the roots $\omega_{1,2}$ of the dispersion relation. This can be done easily in the weakly anisotropic case introduced in section 2 and therefore we postpone our discussion here to that case.

From (2.30), (2.31), and (2.37) we see that

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Case I: } & \left[\begin{array}{c} \omega \\ \psi_3 \\ \psi_1 \\ \psi_2 \end{array} \right] = \left[\begin{array}{c} \omega \\ 0 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{array} \right] \\ \text{Case II: } & \left[\begin{array}{c} \omega \\ \psi_3 \\ \psi_1 \\ \psi_2 \end{array} \right] = \left[\begin{array}{c} \omega \\ i/\sqrt{ab} \\ 0 \\ -1 \end{array} \right] \end{aligned} \quad (4)$$

If we introduce the nine-dimensional column vector ξ with components (ψ_1, ψ_2, ψ_3) , then $G\xi = 0$ iff and only iff

$$a\omega^2 + b\psi_2^2 + c\psi_3^2 = 0, \quad (2)$$

$$2\psi_2\omega - \mu\psi_3 = 0, \quad (3)$$

$$a\psi_1\psi_2 - \omega\psi_3 = 0. \quad (4)$$

From (2) and (3) we obtain $\omega^2 = -b\psi_2^2$ and from (4) $a\psi_1\psi_2 = \omega\psi_3$ we obtain

$$(a^2 - b^2)\psi_1\psi_2 = 0. \quad (5)$$

For non-trivial solutions this

$$(a^2 - b^2)\psi_1\psi_2 = 0. \quad (6)$$

These equations have non-trivial solutions in three mutually exclusive cases:

$$\text{case I: } a^2b^2 \neq 0; \quad \text{case II: } \omega \neq 0; \quad \text{case III: } \omega = 0. \quad (7)$$

We consider first the real dispersion curve.

Case I: Propagating modes.

Here it follows from (7), (6), and (5) that

$$\omega^2 = 0 \quad (8)$$

and

$$k^2 + b^2 - c^2 k^2 = 0. \quad (9)$$

Therefore there are two roots of the dispersion relation

$$\omega = \omega(k, \varepsilon) = \pm \sqrt{c^2 k^2 + b^2}. \quad (10)$$

We shall see that each is of multiplicity 2. For each root (10) we choose real linearly independent vectors P_j ($j=1, 2$) which satisfy (8) and determine corresponding vectors Q_j , and R_j from (3) and (4). Then we impose the normalization condition (3.10) and find that

$2\epsilon P_i \cdot P_j = \delta_{ij}$. Therefore we must set $P_j = (2\varepsilon)^{-1/2} e_j$ where e_1 and e_2 are real unit vectors which are mutually orthogonal and orthogonal to k .

Then the components of E_j are

$$E_j = (P_j, Q_j, R_j) = \left(\frac{1}{2\varepsilon} e_j, \sqrt{\frac{\epsilon}{2\varepsilon}} e_3, \frac{i b}{\sqrt{2\varepsilon}} e_j \right), \quad j = 1, 2. \quad (11)$$

We introduce a unit vector q_3 in the ray direction. Then the group velocity vector is given by

$$v_g = q \cdot h = \frac{c^2}{2\varepsilon} k = \frac{1}{2\varepsilon} k, \quad (12)$$

and (11) becomes

$$x_1 = \left(\frac{1}{2\varepsilon} e_1, \sqrt{\frac{\epsilon}{2\varepsilon}} e_2, \frac{i b}{\sqrt{2\varepsilon}} e_1 \right), \quad (13)$$

$$x_2 = \left(\frac{1}{2\varepsilon} e_2, -\sqrt{\frac{\epsilon}{2\varepsilon}} e_1, \frac{i b}{\sqrt{2\varepsilon}} e_2 \right). \quad (14)$$

Since two linearly independent null vectors ψ_1 & ψ_2 of \mathcal{L} satisfy condition (10), we may multiply (2)

The matrix S is given by (2.37). Since ψ_1 and ψ_2 are real except for the factor i in the last three components, it is easily seen from (3.22) that $r_{\alpha\beta}$ is real. Thus condition (3.47) is satisfied. Furthermore,

$$Q = S^2 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad (15)$$

and it follows from (15) and (34) that condition (3.30) is satisfied which is given by

$$\eta = \frac{\omega^2}{k^2}. \quad (16)$$

Thus we may use (3.56) and (3.57) to determine ψ_0 . The properties of this solution formula for ψ_0 will be discussed further in section 5.

Let us finally note that (3.14) becomes

$$\frac{ds}{dx} + 2\eta s = 0 \Rightarrow s^2 = \frac{\omega^2}{k^2}, \quad (17)$$

and s can be found by integrating this equation along a ray. The dispersion relation (4) for propagating modes is identical to the dispersion relation for the equation studied in [7]. Therefore solutions constructed from these modes will have many properties in common with the solutions studied in [7]. In particular we note that the group speed

$$v_g = \frac{\omega^2 k}{2\eta} = \sqrt{k^2 n^2 / \omega^2} = \sqrt{k^2 - \frac{\omega^2}{n^2}}, \quad (18)$$

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